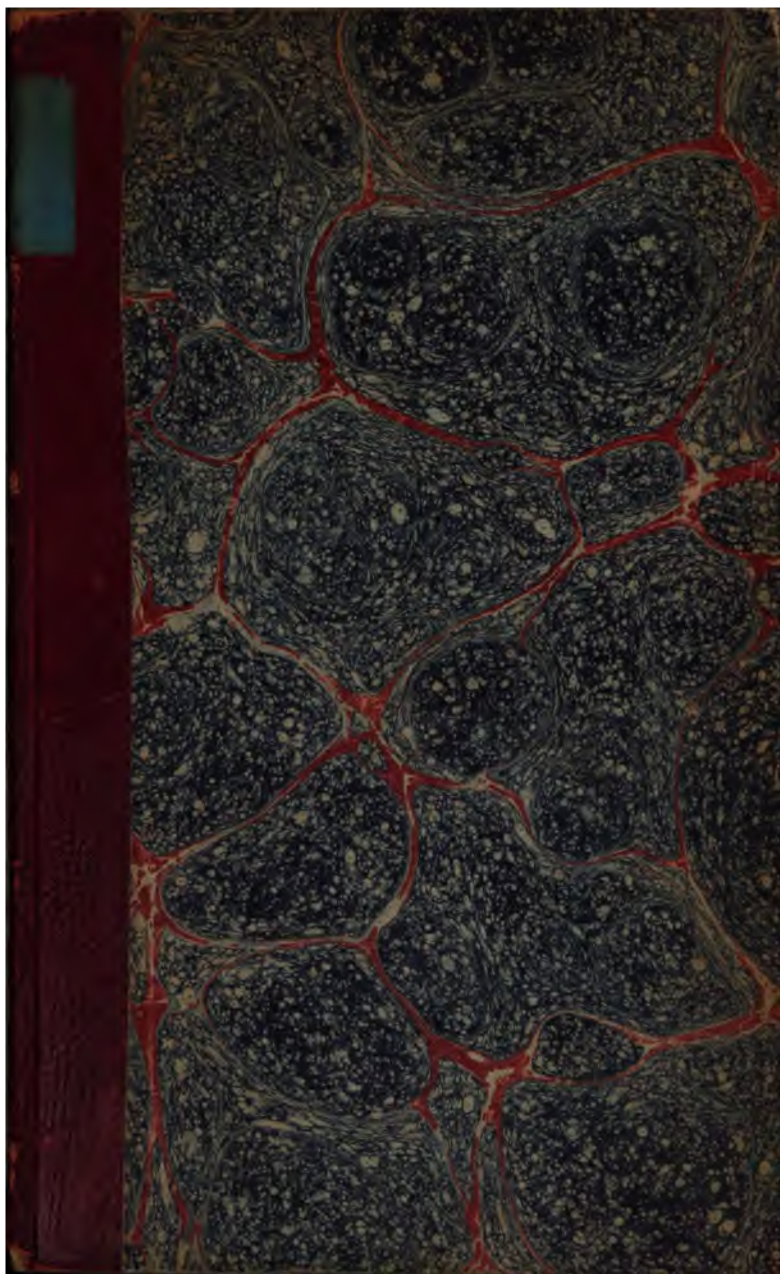




HAMLET TRAVESTIE.

A BURLESQUE.

IN TWO ACTS.

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1849.

TO ALL BRIGHT EYES

AND

MERRY HEARTS,

THIS BURLESQUE

IS MOST LOVINGLY

DEDICATED

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ :—

CLAUDIUS, King of Denmark.
HAMLET, Son of the former, Nephew of the present King.
POLONIUS, Lord Chamberlain.
HORATIO, Friend to Hamlet.
MARCELLUS, an Officer.
BERNARDO, ditto.
FRANCISCO, a Soldier.
GHOST OF HAMLET'S FATHER.
FIRST NAUGHTY COURTIER.
SECOND ditto ditto.
LORD, LADIES, &c.
GERTRUDE, Queen of Denmark, Mother of Hamlet.
OPHELIA, Daughter of Polonius.

HAMLET TRAVESTIE.

A BURLESQUE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Elsinore. *A Platform before the Castle.*

FRANCISCO *on his post. Enter to him* BERNARDO.

Ber. Who's there?

Fran. That's rather rich, t' accost the guard so!
Pray who are you?

Bern. O bother, I'm Bernardo.

Fran. You can't Burnhardo here. It just does freeze!
A night for muffins[a] and for muffatees!

Bern. Be thou the *muff-at-ease.* I'll guard the place.

Fran. Then is our *watch* wound up, and goes a pace!

[*Exit hurriedly—runs against* HORATIO *and* MARCELLUS.

[a] This line supplies conclusive evidence of Shakspere's plagiarism, the beautiful idea of "a night for muffins" being palpably purloined from Dickens. Vide "The Chimes," page 140—1.—*Coleridge.*

Hor. Now, Stupid! O the Watch, I see.

Fran. [*Squaring at Horatio.*] Most like,
With *hands* before its *face*, and *going to strike!*

Mar. 'Tis not a *fashionable square* he squares;
Shall I pitch in?

Hor. No, we have weightier cares:
I'll give this Bendigo a Bender: Go
To *Crib*, not Thomas, but to bed, you know.

[HORATIO *sings, holding his purse. Air—"When the heart of a man," &c.*

When the dander of man is riz and queer,
I'd advise you to sooth it with something from here;
Like the pills of a Cockle, when ta'en at night,
It removes his ill humour, and sets him right.
Joeys and Tizzies may calm his woes,
But the bright Bob is more sweet than those;
Fee him, and see him, with shilling, so willing,
Away to "the Public" he smiling goes.

[*Exit* FRANCISCO.

Hor. And now, Bernardo, when may we expect a
Grand entrée from this here most royal Spectre?

Bern. Don't chaff his Ghostship, or to your surprise,
Out of his Majesty you'll get a *rise!*
For he has Pluto's latch key, and cares nix
For Cerberus, nor at the ferry *Sticks;*
Whene'er he please may quit the gloomy Strand,
By Charon Cross,[b] and leave that shady band;

[b] The ancient name for Charing Cross.—*Malone.*

As some great Don who wanders to and fro
Where Undergraduates are forbid to go.
Only last night, the last as never was,
He was a galivanting here.

Mar. That's poz!
My eye beheld him, and says I for sartain—

Hor. There, there! its all "my eye" and Betty Martin.
I'm up to you, and down on this grim Stalker;
You say he walks the earth, I answer "Walker."

Starts and sings. Air—"Lovely Rosa."

But what's dat in armour dere dat I spy?
I know the old monarch by his rum tog-ge-ry!
They must have forgot to bury him, I fear,
Or else he couldn't rest on his very *bitter bier.*
He looks like wine that's advertiz'd for sale,
"Old and crusted," or "curious and pale."
Chorus. "He looks," &c.

Enter Ghost.

[*Thunder, Lightning, Earthquakes, &c.*

Mar. Horatio, you're a 'Vars'ty man, and pat in
Dead languages, so tackle him in Latin!

Hor. Honor, honoris, dative honori,
Arma, virumque—As in presenti,
Musa, musæ. Amo, amas, amat.

Ber. He doesn't seem to care much about that.

Mar. Perhaps has learn'd below, in Chartist Schools,
Antipathy to any *Special* Rules.

Hor. No, no, he was brought up for better things,
A Cantab he, Sir, for he comes from "*King's*,"
Or, where the Isis Ice is, when 'tis froze,
From the King's Hall and Coll. of Brazen-nose.
To GHOST.
"Your Name and College?" Not a word, by gum,
Not even this, "Pulvis et umbra sum"—
Like other regal gentlemen, because
He's but the shadow of what once he was.

Mar. [*Drawing Truncheon.*] Shall I strike at him with my partizan?

Hor. Aye, lead in clubs, and play the deuce, my man.

Mar. Thus I play thro' his hand. [*Strikes at* GHOST.] It is no use,
No more than playing with my Lord de Roos!
[*Cock crows.*

Hor. Ah, he's no Cock-lane Ghost, he's off, as near
Comes the clear chant of morning's Chanticleer;
Best love to Proserpine, old boy, from me!
And now lets tell young Hamlet of this spree.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Room in the Castle.*

Enter the KING, QUEEN, HAMLET, *and* Courtiers.

King. Soft water, from the water-cart of grief,
At length has laid, to our immense relief,

The dust, which threaten'd all of us to smother,
Upon the death of dear departed brother.
We need to wash his grave with tears no longer.
Let's moisten our own clay with something stronger!
Put off the garbs of woe—[*Takes narrow black ribbon from the sleeve of his pink—Queen ditto from bonnet—Courtiers take off black watch ribbons, false black moustaches, &c.*]—and come to dine;
We'll try to night another sort of *wine!*
You've been like hermits in their cells, my fellars,
Come try the *hermitage* that's in our cellars—
And when disposed for fruitier stuff ye feel,
We'll tap the dear departed one's black seal!
What ho! a corkscrew, and flat candlestick!

Queen. A moment pause, my beautiful, my brick!
Why looks the young prince Hamlet thus forlorn?
As one, who in some Monster Sweep hath drawn
A horse that's dead! Is there some little bill,
Like his own elbows, nearly out, or still
Worse, has he pawn'd his Sunday clothes?

King. The lad
Thinks not about his *uncle*, but his dad.
And since *he* left us, this unhappy fellow
Passes his life in one eternal bellow;—
As tho' my brother's bones, like bones we get
At supper, should have lots of heavy wet
Tears cannot minister to kings departed,
Or p'r'aps *Thiers* would, when Louis Philippe started.

Just like some Sikh he looks, who hears men say,
That Napier 's coming seek and *hide* to play ;—
Sure, Prince, thou art the Prince of Whales for blubber,
A nasty, sullen, aggerawating lubber !

Queen. Come, Claudius, I say, just you draw it mild !
I can't quite *honour* such a *check on child.*
This boy of mine is no French *kid* to try
Your great big hand on till the stitches fly.
I know his nature, and thus much reveal,
"When putting on tight boots, *soft soap* your heel."
True, he needs med'cine, but most sure I am,
He 'll take the powder best, when hid in jam.

King. Well then, I'll ride him with a snaffle rein :
"Sweet Hamlet, loveliest Hamlet of the plain."[c]
Be jolly ! like our royal brother, Cole,
Cheer up, and sing us, "Landlord fill the bowl."
As the swart Ethiop, when the curtain drops,
Rubs his dark phiz, and wears his natural chops ;
Or the green-grocer, when the funeral 's o'er,
Grins with his neighbours, and is *mute* no more ;
Or as at School, when Ushers wish 'good night,'
We take from 'neath our beds the hidden light ;—
So, Sun of Denmark, be thy darkness past,
And deign among the Danes to shine at last !

c "I would not," says Lamb, "speak disrespectfully of Oliver Goldsmith, but there is something very like this line at the beginning of 'the Deserted Village.'"

Dine with us, Hamlet! Love, what's on the *Carte?*

Queen. The *veal* of course, dear! Really, beef and tart.

But if our Courtiers dine, we mean to treat,
With candied sweetmeats this our candid suite:
Some Stilton too.

King. Nay, pause there, if you please,
Crême de la crême, we'll be ourselves *the cheese.*

Polonius. Aid me, ye dainty Danes, the while I sing,
How there shall be "a dainty dish to set before the King!"

POLONIUS *sings.* *Air—"There's a good time coming, boys."*

There's some roast beef coming, Sire,
A good joint coming;—
Lots of fat, and nice pota-
-toes a browning in the gra-
-vy. Roast beef coming!
Can't you sniff the savoury smell,
Growing strong and stronger?
But the cook, to do it well,
Must baste a little longer.

Chorus. There's roast beef coming, Sire,
A good joint coming!
There's roast beef coming;—
Baste a little longer.

Queen. Dine with us, Hamlet!

Hamlet. Ma'am, I would rather not.
'Tis not alone this inky pal-e-tot

Nor customary suits of solemn black
(I 've three a-year, and send the old ones back
To Moses). Nor this pocket-handkerchief
(*Squeezes his pocket-handkerchief from which water drops on the stage.*)
Steep'd in the fruitful river of my grief.—
No, there is that within which passeth show.

Pol. Is it Polonies ?

Hamlet. No, Polonius, no !
Not England's lamprey-loving, Henry First,
Who " went to ground after a glorious *burst* ;"—
Not he, who on pork chops at night regales ;
Not he, who feeds upon thy rabbits, Wales ;
Not he, who eats the under-donest parts
Of veal, or giblet-pies, or e'en cow-hearts :
Not he, by strawberries and ic'd cream oppress'd,
Where, Piccadilly, thou dost yield the best ;
Not the young boy, who, bursting from his clothes,
Says, " I 've had nine o' them, and ten o' those ;"
Not the policeman[d] who, sagaciously,
With cooks and coldmeats keepeth company ;
Not the prize pig, by princely Albert fed ;
Nor lap dog, by some ancient Virgin led ;
Nor, lastly, Alderman, who fattens where
Some Mayor, just knighted, deals around night-mare ;

[d] In another passage Shakspeare alludes to this dignitary, applying to him the more familiar appellative of " Polacks :" ' He smote the sledded Polacks on the ice.'—*Goethe*.

Ah, none of these, from their stomachic pits,
Know what a burden on my bosom sits!
Pol. Moxon's Magnesia p'r'aps—
King. (*interrupting*) To watch him cry,
You 'd think he meant the Water Cure to try.
(And 'tis a sight I should enjoy most fully, [*Aside.*
To see him get a *towelling* from *Gully!*)
Well Prince, you 'll find a knife, and fork, and *spoon*,
(The last he carries with him poor gone 'coon.') [*Aside.*
"By, by," till then! Remember six the hour!
Now fetch our best Regalia from the Tower;
We mean that best Regalia, which glows,
At eventide, between our chin and nose!
Call out my barbers!*
Queen. Aye, there's work enough,
Your *heir apparent's* so uncommon *rough*.
King. *The blade* that's out of *temper* must be stropp'd;
Polon. The Guv'nor means young Hamlet should be whopp'd.

Exeunt King, Queen, Polonius, and Courtiers,
Music,—"*Rogues' march.*"

Hamlet. No, I will see my mother *farther* fust.
O, that this bust of mine indeed were *bust!*

* Schlegel observes that "there would be great difficulty in shaving a monarch (or indeed any individual) having a large weed in his mouth." But Steevens beautifully suggests that royalty was doubtless provided with "the Plantagenet razor."

Unprofitable, beery, flat, and stale,
Seems to me now all that the world thinks ale.
Burton on Trent, O thine are bitter brews!
"Burton on Melancholy" now I choose.
All recollections of the tankards big,
In which I twigg'd the hop, have hopp'd the twig!
The pint of "pl' ale" soothes me no more. Alas!
I cannot play upon thy *viols*, *Bass!*[f]
That *Maltese Cross*, call'd "half and half," I find,
Can yield no *balm* to work upon my mind;
XX to excess I consume in vain;
And *Buxton's Waters* cannot ease my pain.
Fie on the world! it is a 'tator-garden,
Where all 's unsound as Murphy (ax his pardon
For he 's no more, like my poor *Daddy*;-*long*
Legs have been nought to them whose *race* was gone)
Not two months dead! (Yet if his life had sped
Till Tuesday week, two months he 'd have been dead)
So excellent a King! That was to Uncle,
As biggest diamond to the least carbuncle;
Champagne to Spruce; a Lopez to a Cuba;
Dear Jenny Lind to "Boz's famous Juba;"
As natural charms to Crenoline; point lace
To Nottingham; the blush on some fair face

[f] To establish the antiquity of this family, we quote from "*Annales Antiquitates*" (Oxford) page 12, h.: "*Bas*, the son of Boteiras, made head against Caranus, one of Alexander's Generals." He invented the Bassoon, the Bastile, Basso Relievo, &c."

To rouge ; and this reminds me of my Mother ;—
Mama, thy name is Frailty ! But the other
Day poor Papa you hugg'd ; and now this lout
Snuffs Pius Papa's Roman Candle out ;
And, like Italian Chartists o'er again,
Drives out the King with Punch *á la Romaine*.

Enter MARCELLUS *and* HORATIO.

Marc. Hail, Prince !
Haml. Why ale ? Bucellas is your name
Marc. Marcellus, Sir.
Haml. Marsala—much the same.

(*to* HORATIO.)

Welcome from Wittenberg. Term is o'er no doubt.
Does Alma Mater know her youths are out ?
How sped your studies ?
Hor. O, by *extra pain*,
I got in a *First Class* (*aside*) by Railway Train.
Ham. Were you not somewhere 'mong *the buffers* friend ?
Why, gracious, gentlemen your hair's on end !
Mar. Like hares on end, Prince, when your beagles near
First whisper currant jelly in their ear ;
Or just before the greyhounds swift pursue,
And then, *unlimited*, the game is " *Loo*" ;
Like conies listening to the ferrets' feet,
Ere they vacate their boroughs and their seat.

Hor. We've seen a sight all other sights to flog.
Well may our hair thus "go the whole" hedge "hog":—
Well may it stick out all ways of a sudden,
As do the almonds on a birthday pudding.

Ham. Come, leave your head, and let us have your *tale*.

Mar. I'll dock it short, Prince! *Posted* in our *mail*,
Last night to guard the keep, and keep the guard,
We saw your Guv'nor in the Castle Yard!

Ham. Gracious!

Hor. By no means—not a word to say.

Ham. How clad?

Hor. I fancy in a *cut-away*,
So short he stayed.

Mar. No, no; my liege, your sire
Wore the bright helmet *scorched by many a fire*,*
And the same buckler which so oft did gleam
O'er toughest *chop* or hottest *broil* supreme!*
Aye, many *a soul* beneath that shield hath lain—
And *saddles* reek'd—the saddles of the slain!

[*Song*, Marcellus (*with much feeling*). *Air*—"*Mary Blane.*"

I once did love a thundering brick,
The *pick'd* of all the Danes!
A. 1., in fact, "A Wunner!"
But ah, no more he reigns!

** "The armour worn by the Ghost seems to have borne a strong resemblance to a saucepan and dish cover."—*Dr. Johnson.*

We young *sparks* went like *blazes*
In that great comet's track,—
Until, one summer's arternoon,
We found him on his back.

Chorus. O rest thee quiet, Royal Dane,
Keep in o'nights, dear Monarch, do
O rest thee, quiet, Royal Dane,
Let's never meet again!

I went into the wood one night,
The sentry's wooden home;—
The white man came upon my beat,
And there awhile did roam.
I still feel flabbergaster'd, for
I cannot but suppose
He's only cut to come again
On them departed toes!

Chorus. "O rest thee quiet &c."

When call'd to mount this odious guard,
I sigh to wish good bye
Unto my brother sodgers, tho'
They swear 'tis all my eye.
I take an extra noggin, but
It is no use at all,—
For when his spirit's sure to rise,
My spirit's sure to fall!

Chorus. "O rest thee &c."

Ham. This very night we'll boldly audience crave;
All spectres are respecters of the brave.

Exeunt.

SCENE III.—*The Platform.*

Enter HAMLET *(with blunderbuss)* HORATIO *(with poker)* MARCELLUS.

Ham. The air bites shrewdly: is it very cold?

Hor. The lambs bleat for more *lambswool* in the fold;
Gunter, and Grange, and Grove smile in their sleep,
For Wenham's lake to night is frozen deep;
Cabmen congeal upon the Stand, and there
None but the very brave deserve *the fare;*
On such a night shall happy visions wait
For Thompson, maker of the Patent skate;
On such a night shall great Vesuvius be
Glad of his *crater comforts* inwardly;
Etna be *Snow'd on;* and *the Coldstream* wear
A coat of *frieze* like our Marcellus there.

(Flourish of trumpets.)

Mar. What's that ere air? was it a Polka?

Hor. No
The Post Horn. But a very feeble blow.
Some tipsy *Cornet!*

Mar. Let us hope, at least,
"Music has power to sooth" the padded beast

Ham. By the king's Trumpeters that blast was blown—

Hor. His trumpeters! we thought he was his own—

Ham. And when you note those notes so falsely utter'd,
The king 'tis said gives *toasts*—profusely *butter'd.*

Mar. Your *Uncle spout and pledge*—that's not the way!

Ham. Hark how the donkeys thro' their trumpets *bray!*
And with their racketting and noisy sport,
Make the whole palace one huge *racquette court.*

(Horns sound, and distant voices are heard singing :—

For *she's* a jolly good fellow, the Queen's a jolly good fellow,
She is a jolly good fellow, which nobody can deny
[HAMLET *(sings)*. O yes for that can I—
Chorus. If you do, you tell a lie—
For she's a jolly good fellow,
She *is* a jolly good fellow,
&c., &c, &c, &c.)

Hor. (*drinking out of flask*) Your Ma!

Ham. My Uncle's wife, Sir!

Hor. I recant.
No flatterer he, but only *sick of aunt.*

Ham. What ails Marcellus? Speak man! well, no matter :—
Your teeth, it seems, if not your tongue, can chatter.

Hor. O Prince, there's something in that awe-struck ogle,
Which makes me think Marcellus sees the Bogle!

Mar. The ghost for fifty! Even odds I'll lay—

Hor. *Well, lay the ghost;* he's *on the turf*, you say.

Mar. But not a man of *substance:* 'twould n't do to
Receive a bill at two months upon Pluto.

Hor. Alas, he comes! Have you no charms to bring?

Mar. (*Modestly*) No charms, but those of nature·
And this ring:
It is galvanic; and I have been told,
That all who buy it will themselves be

Hor. Sold!
What shall we do? See the late King *appear!*

Mar. And once so generous now gets much too *near!*

Hor. O that we had "the Daily News!" 'tis said
The boldest spirit will avert his head
From that; and he, whose heart is fix'd upon
Its *Leader*, must turn goose, and not a swan
Like Jove. He's here!

Enter Ghost. (Thunder, &c.)

O try some other tack;
You'll take the *shine* out of your *Son*, go back!

[GHOST *sings.* I shall not go home till morning;
I shall not go home till morning;
I shall not go home till morning;
Till day light doth appear.

Ham. Till day light doth appear.

Hor. Till day light doth appear.

Mar. Till day light doth appear.

Ghost I
Ham. Hor. Mor. He. } Won't go home till morning.

Ham. O all ye ministers of state, defend us!
(Alas! that ministry's too drunk t'attend us!)
Yet will I speak to thee! I'll call thee Pa!
Dad, Faythur, Guv'nor, tell us what you are!
Say why, without the usual month's warning,
Your situation you have left this morning?
Have you been prigging? Answer, I entreat,
Is there a P for Pluto on that sheet?

[*Ghost shakes his head in negation.*

Why, then, what means this new *funereal game?*
This *shady* trick? O blame it!

Hor. Rather blame
The Vagrant Act, whose *clause* can't reach the scamp,
But give full freedom to this *martial tramp!*

Ghost to MARCELLUS. If I'm caught begging in the fact, 'twill be
Relieve us, Captain, of your *Company!*
Horatio, also, our permission hath,
"Ire lavatum," [Horace,] "Go to *Bath!*"

Hor. He's but an *upstart*, and speaks like one, too.

Ham. My father, gents, is not the *Pa-ve-knew.*
Besides, he's from the Lower House, and there
A bit of Billingsgate is always fair.

Hor. The crabby cove!

Mar. The *medlar*, old and wizen!
Let's hie away from such *high ways* as his'n.

[*Exeunt* HORATIO *and* MARCELLUS.

Ghost. List, list, O list!

Ham. Is he recruiting, then?
"Wanted immediately, some fine young men."
I shall not list, Sir.

Ghost. Mark me!

Ham. Yes, I'll try;
Though 'tis "a hard game and the marker dry."

Ghost. Like the sea-snake, I could a tale unfold!

H*am.* Pray don't! 'twould be indelicate and bold;
And tho' that's nothing new in *Palace Court*,
It won't do here.

Ghost. Your's is a quick retort,
More curt than courteous. Yet you us'd to dote.

H*am.* You've *chang'd, my sovereign*;—so I've *chang'd my note*.
Alter'd the king, and *chang'd the subject*, too.

Ghost. Do you believe in Ghost Stories?

H*am.* I do.

Ghost. You shall hear mine; and with harmonious aids,
As lately set to music for "*The Shades*."
'T is a *dark* subject, so I'll *pitch* it strong:—

H*am.* Order! the gent in tops will sing a song!
Doubtless 'twill be "*Der Wanderer*,"—vocal he
Like other members of "*the Zingari*."

Ghost *sings.* *Air*—"*Billy Taylor*."

I, the ex-king, was a jolly old fellow,
And did the thing at a dashing rate;

Till, like most of my brother monarchs,
I was forc'd for to abdicate.

Chorus. GHOST *and* HAMLET, *dancing round*, Tol-a-lol a-lol lol lol, &c.

Air—"*The merry days when we were young.*"

O those merry days, those merry days, were just the thing,
Where could be jollier spree, than in the pleasant place where we were king.
Ham. King of trumps was he! the best of pace he ever went!
Ghost. But now the mon you mean is still as any *mon-u-ment.*

Chorus—O those merry days, &c.

Air—"*Long, long ago.*"

Doubtless, my boy, you remember all that!
Ham. Yes, Pa, I do! Yes, Pa, I do!
Ghost. So I infer from the crape on your hat—
Not very new—not very new!
Ah, but you don't know who forced us to stop,
(Wicious old warmint!) our royal gallop?
Nor who compell'd us our perch for to hop!
Ham. Can't say I do—say I do!

Air—"*Days when we went gipseying.*"

In the days of which I sing, my lad, you very well do know,
Our custom of an afternoon a Lopez for to blow;

We blew it in the orchard, and then 'twould often hap,
That first we'd take an apple, and then we'd take a nap!
O Hamlet, in the summer heat, if you have early din'd,
You'll find the after-dinner weed a luxury most refin'd.

Air—"The Admiral."

How dozily, how cozily we slept one pleasant day,
When your unpleasant uncle stole on us where we lay;
And he'd been unto the chemistor's—yes, there he'd been and said,
How by rats behind the arras we were greatly harassed.
They gave the beast a bottle, with a label on its back—
P-O-I-S-O-N, Sir, in letters large and black!
And as he left the shop, thus spoke that druggist to his lad:—
"He is the ugliest customer as ever a druggist had."
"He is the ugliest customer," &c. &c.

Air—"Eveleen's Bower."

O sad was the hour, while asleep in my bower,
With a glass of gin and water just nigh, just nigh—
He put the poison in, saying, "Thus, in his own *gin*,
The fowler shall be caught by-and-by, by-and-by!"

Air—"There is nae luck about the house."

Alas! too true his prophecy! I woke with parched lip,
And took a hearty swig, for then I couldn't stay to sip:
The *reign* was nearly over, though still *the glass went down*;
And Denmark, then, you see, my son, was done by *Hollands brown!*
"The reign," &c.

But soft! methinks, I scent the morning air;—
They're sitting up, too, down at Pluto's there.
Aurora, alias rosy finger'd morn,
Takes down the shutters, and reveals the dawn.
And, therefore, I've few words to add: your mother
In this consarn is just as bad as t'other!
(And quite averse to swearing as I am,
I must just go as far as Rot-her-dam!)
Sarve 'em both out—if you do love your Dad,
O cook their goose, and cook it soon, my lad!
Farewell! the glowworm's "best night-lamp" decays,
My furlough's o'er, and I rejoin *"the Greys."*
Remember me!

[*They embrace. Exit* GHOST. *Flour left on* HAMLET'S *dress.*

H*am.* My valet's sure to do!
Would, when he brush'd himself, he'd brush'd me, too!
Why do I jest? when I should be intent,
Not upon puns, but upon punishment.
O mother, mother! must I cook thy goose?
Is there no writ of error—no excuse?
Why must I cook it? Would my father feast
Upon his wife, like Cambes, Lydian beast!*

* For an account of this gentlemanly gourmand, *vide* Ælian, i. V. H. c. 27.

How must I cook it—Ah! I know too well,
For once I *look'd* in "*Glasse*," and Glasse did tell:
"To cook your goose: first catch your goose: and then
Just wring its neck. When dead" (that is a *when?*)
"Pull it, and dress; the giblets, then, lay by"—
(Think of my uncle's giblets!) "for a pie"—
I can no more—O horror, most intense!
Why did the king thus turn *King's Evidence?*
Why did you come, Papa, to tell me this?
You must have known my ignorance was bliss.
Is there no gate keeper at Hades' Lodge?
Why don't they try the early closing dodge?
Have they no proctors, no police to say:—
"Why are you wandering here," go back, "I pray."

[*Enter* HORATIO *and* MARCELLUS.

Hor. Why, what the *Dickens!* here's "the haunted man"—

Mar. "And the Ghost's bargain," tell us, if you can!

Hor. There's been a dust here! Ghosts converse, they say—
In a most *flow'ry*, *mealy*-mouthëd way.

Mar. Don't he look fishy?

Ham. And feels fishy, too!
Caught *with a hook*, and put into *a stew*.

Mar. He's like a whiting!

Hor. Yes; and seems to hide
His *tale between his lips like whiting fried!*

Mar. Come, give us, *Prince*, of what has pass'd a *sketch*—
We're not agoing to publish what you *etch!*

Ham. That would be *strange!* Well, then, I think I will—

[Ghost (*below.*)
You hold your jaw, my boy,

Ham. O criky, Bill!

Mar. Why stops he speechless? Why thus waiting dumb,
Like a dumb waiter?

Ham. Gents, the word is "mum."
Let us depart! Henceforth our tongues must be
Hermetically seal'd, like *tongues for sea!*

[*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Room in Polonius' House.*

Enter POLONIUS *and* OPHELIA.

Oph. O, dear Papa, I've been in such a fright!
Sewing just now a button on your night—
Pol. [*interrupting.*] My love, I blush!
Oph. (Well, you know what I mean.)
In came Lord Hamlet, anything but clean!
Pale as his hose, or Hosier's Ghost the rather;
His stockings were so very dirty, Father
His old and seedy neckerchief awry!
Pol. My daughter, reverence an *ancient tie!*
Oph. Unbrac'd his doublet! And O, such a hat!
Pol. I know it well: *the Prince invented that!*
Oph. Uncomely, and uncomb'd about the head,
I don't believe he'd really been in bed;
Or, if he had been, why he'd been and slept
In that bin where the Palace flour is kept.
And then his boots! at those I up and spoke:—
"Is then *the Warren stopp'd,* and has *Day broke?*

Go to the scraper! to the door-mat run!
Our *Turkey*'s getting rather *overdone*."

Pol. And did the scraper clear him from his scrape?

Oph. By no means—with a look, black as the crape
Upon his four and ninepenny, he came,
And took my hand; and then he press'd the same,
Which seem'd to do him good—for then he smil'd—
And came it strong, and wouldn't draw it mild—
In fact, he kiss'd me!

Pol. O the man is mad!

Oph. For kissing me! I can't see that, my dad!

Pol. Well, on reflection, 'tis not strange, my puss!
Being in a hurry, why he took *the Bus*.

Oph. A *stage box* on that *bus* he might have ta'en.
But since to be his debtor I disdain,
I would not keep his kiss, but gave it back!

Pol. Bestowed, in short, another kind of *smack*.

Oph. His was a *blunder-buss*, and so my sire,
A small *salute* I from my *smack* did fire.

Pol. What did he say?

Oph. He never told his love,
But look'd it most uncommon!

Pol. Like a dove
With a sore throat! What then?

Oph. O such a sigh!

Pol. You prick'd him with your needle.

Oph. No, not I!
O such a sigh, my Father, as would fill
The great Nassau Balloon, or turn a mill!

Pol. Few men can raise the wind like that, my ducky!
And then, what next?
Oph. The Prince, Pa, cut his lucky.
Pol. He's mad, and mad for love of you.
Oph. O la!
How very nice! Can madmen marry, Pa?
Pol. Doubtless, my daughter. Nay, it has been said,
None are quite *compos*, when about to wed.
I do remember much confusion here, [*pointing to forehead*],
When first I call'd your future mother, "dear;"
Saw Hymen's torch-light in her glowing e'e,
And *caught her eyes a cauterising* me.
And O, the pride, when first in joyous vein,
"Mrs. Polonius!" I said—"Champagne?"
To which she answered (every word I treasure)
"Aaron Polonius, I will with pleasure."

POLONIUS *sings.* *Air—"The light of other days."*

But all that sort of thing has faded,
The honeymoon's o'ercast!
The horse, you know, is soonest jaded,
Who goes at first too fast!
The very deuce no long time after
She play'd, upon my life;
And all our mirthsome love and laughter,
She turn'd to weary strife.

Pol. Yes! Love is like some grand new Railway
Line,
Which (the Prospectus tells us) must combine
All the advantages to railways known,
With much peculiar merit of its own!
How easy, then, the gradients to our sight,
Surveyed thro' Cupid's false Theodolite.
Trivial the outlay, small the risks appear,
(For then our telescope 's invert.) But near,
And huge the profits to our eye; for Hope
Lends us her Hydrogen-Gas Microscope.
Mamas, as managing directors, sit;
Hear our petition, and the Act permit;—
Our Scrip, the License, then we proudly claim;
And Hymen's Company enrols our name!
Oph. What then, Papa?
Pol. The newly married pair
Pay their *first calls*—a somewhat *triste* affair!
Awhile the shareholders in peace repose;
Dream Love's young Dream—and all's *couleur de rose*
Till, on the waking ear (and purse) shall fall,
Fearful and frequent the loud *railway call!*
Oph. What does that typify?
Pol. In married life,
The shrill accostals of a scolding wife!
Who, like an engine, when she's *on the rail,*
At every obstacle must shriek and wail;
Who, like an engine, (do not sneer, my daughter!)
Cannot get on unless she's *in hot water;*

Who, like an engine—

Oph. O, I do beseech,
This *train* of thought some Terminus may reach!
Rake out your fire! or damp it: shall I ring
For liquors?

Pol. No! If you would sooth me, sing!
Cut out the Lind! for Denmark loves indeed
To have a little *turn-up* with *the Swede!*
Ophelia mia, beat that "Figli-a
Del Reggimento!"

Oph. I've sore throat, Papa!

Pol. These singers' ailments all *lie in their throats!*
Stick some "Pulmonic *Wafers*" on your *notes.*
Now to the Palace, for the king must know
This news of Ham et.

Oph. Yet, before you go—
For dear Mama, myself, and sex, combin'd,
I'll quote some verses just recall'd to mind:

"When you were that unpleasant thing,
A baby, who would smile and sing,
'The like o' this hath never bin?'"

Pol. [*abruptly.*] My Mother!

Oph. Who thought that nothing would suffice
But costly lace on frocks so nice,—
And dare not tell Papa the price?

Pol. [*less abruptly.*] My Mother!

Oph. Who told the tale, in twilight gloom?

Who read of witch astride her broom,
And poor Cock Robin's early tomb?

Pol. [*somewhat affected.*] My Mother!

Oph. Who lov'd you, a mischievous boy?
Who spread the jam? Who bought the toy?
Rejoicing in your every joy?

Pol. [*much affected.*] My Mother!

Oph. If aught went wrong, who bore the blame?
Who wept, when first "the half-year" came?
Who sent *those* hampers, fruit and game?

Pol. [*with epicurean empressement.*] My Mother!

Oph. Who, when you wrote some doggrel verse,
Crimson with pride, assur'd old nurse,
"That parts of Milton were much worse?"

Pol. [*as conscious of genius.*] My Mother!

Oph. Who, when the loutish age began,
And boyhood's thoughts on razors ran,
Call'd you "the gentlemanly man?"

Pol. [*pulling up his collar, as though the maternity had well spoken.*] My Mother!

Oph. Who, when they "pluck'd" you in "the schools,
At "Little Go," 'bout Grammar Rules,
Stoutly maintained "the Dons" were fools?

Pol. [*approvingly.*] My Mother!

Oph. Who, in your youth's hot giddy day,
Revealed a better, brighter way,
And kindled first-love's glorious ray?

Pol. [*fondly.*] Your Mother!

Oph. Who upon earth, who only, knows
Th' exact location of your clothes ?
Who marks your linen ? darns your hose ?
P*ol.* *(gratefully.)* Your Mother !
Oph. Who best your pipe and glass can fill ?
Whose *taper fingers* light the spill ?
Who, if you're poorly, knows *Pa's pill ?*
P*ol.* *(ruefully.)* Your Mother !
Oph. Who, when in sulky mood you fret—
P'raps kick your corn, or lose a bet—
Sings still, "We may be happy yet !"
P*ol.* *(cheerfully.)* Your Mother !
Oph. What tho' sometimes o'er married life
A cloud may come, a moment's strife.
Who makes the sunshine ?
Pol. [*enthusiastically.*] O, my wife !
Your Mother !
Who checks her Daddy in his spleen ?
Who makes his brow once more serene ?
And bids him say, "I've hasty been ?"
Pol. [*embracing.*] My Daughter !
Pol. Woman for ever ! Scold they as they will,
Marriage ! with all thy faults, I love thee still !

Exeunt to Music.

Air—"Here's a health to all good lasses."

SCENE II.—*A room in the Castle.*

Enter HAMLET *(advances thoughtfully to front, and produces a bottle, labelled "Old Tom.")*

Ham. To drink, or not to drink! That is the question.
Whether 'tis better to let cares infest one,
And put up with misfortunes, such as are
A wicious mother and a poison'd Pa,—
Or, with this pocket pistol to my brain,
Plunge in Blue Ruin the Blue Devil's train!
To drink—to feel with each successive "Go"
Some pang depart, till Hope alone doth glow,
As in Pandora's reticule—the plan
Looks a good opening for a nice young man!
So easy too—to drink, to sleep, to dream—
There's more in that though than at first doth seem;—
For I have heard the restless toper knows
(When he has shuffled off his bed the clothes)
Nocturnal horrors! *Spirits*, floor'd by day,
Rise up in vengance, and assert their sway:—
Some grin like gurgoyles; like night mares infest
His sleep, and chaff him; some upon his breast
Dance endless Polkas; some fan fever's flame,—
Vex him with thirst, and of his thirst make game;
Bring Schweppe's ic'd waters to his dreaming gaze—
Just to his mouth the claret cup they raise—
And while, like Tantalus, he may not sip,
Cool lumps of 'Wenham' bob against his lip!

——- I will *not* drink! No bottle-imp shall make
Of me a *Sponge* and then a *Tipsy Cake.*
Yet I've a deed to do, and need to prime,
Like a mild lover at the "popping" time;
Like cockney fox-hunter of lily heart,
Who needs the jumping-powder ere he start;
Like the dread toothache's victim, ere he try
The artist who can *draw on ivory;*
Like waking men who find, that over night
They've lost a sum, 'tis not convenient quite
To pay; or those by whose bed-side doth stand
The punctual Second, pistol-case in hand!
Like—Soft, she comes, I must feign mad a while;
If the cook flirt, the goose is sure to spile.

Enter OPHELIA *(with basket).*

Ham. Miss, if you 're *arter I* 'tis all *in vain.*
Oph. I come your presents to restore again.
Ham. I never gave you nothing—but the wall.
Oph. The lie, my lord; for here behold them all!
[*Producing a Profile.*] This profile, Prince, at two-and-six (alack!
That such a *mug* should ever know a *crack!*)
You gave, and giving it, you fondly said:
"You've got my heart, Ophelia!—take my head!"
Ham. What a *Black Prince!*
Oph. [*producing a dead canary.*] This hapless bird you knew—
Who every day his tiny *bucket* drew,

Until he *kick'd* it. Such a *pip* he got!
Ham. What from "*a Bullfinch?*"
Oph. I conjecture not;
But take the body!
Ham. No I shan't! In fact,
I shall suspend this Habeas Corpus Act.
Your poor *canary* 's got the *sack*, but I
Don't wish to *bag* it. Ornithology
Is not my forte.
Oph. Your *fort* is Elsinore.
Ham. Else in our fort I am deceived.
Oph. Once more
Remove your *presents!* Take these faded posies!
My "*lads love*" blooms no more "*among the roses!*"
But "love lies bleeding."
Ham. What a sad disaster!
I'll ask the Queen to give him some *Court* plaster.
Love 's always tripping, stumbling in the dark;
Oph. And yet the arch young archer hits his mark,—
Like the bold bowmen, who at *Cressy Muster'd*,
To Gall them Gauls, who there so much the wust had;—
Or that *Sweet William*, which did *shoot* so well,
When Gesler fail'd to win at *Bag-a-Tell*—
"The merry Swiss boy" cried, while aiming true,
"Go it, my *pippin!*" and *the apple* flew.—

Love shoots from *beaux yeux* not *yew bows* I'm told

Ham. And *keeps his eye*, tho' blind, *upon the gold !**

[*Aside.*] (But soft! hold hard! I'm growing spoony, so

Must try the mad dodge!) To a Nunnery go!

"Tell them to chain up Ugly," and dispose

Of that large instrument which smoothes the clothes.

Oph. No veil, except the bridal, for this brow!

Ham. Ah, apropos, I'll sing!

Oph. Alas, what now?

[HAMLET *sings wildly, Air*—"*She wore a wreath of roses.*"

She wore a sky-blue walrus in her pewter chemisette;
Her wooden leg was smiling at a sum in tare and tret;
Her bantams play'd the Jew's harp; the Pope cried Hip, Hip, Hip;
And she herself was knitting a seventy-four-gun ship.
I saw her in the gardin,
Where Yarmouth bloaters grew,
Selling Tom-tits five a fardin
To unhappy young Leboo!

Ham. [*aside*] (That's in the early gothic style, I'm thinking,

"When Music Heavenly Maid" was quite a kin-chin?)

* Shakspere was himself a first-rate shot with the bow, tho' he lost a good many arrows as a boy ("in my school days, when I had lost one shaft," &c.); and on one occasion had the great misfortune to shoot his "arrow o'er the house" (at Stratford on Avon) and to "hit his brother." He had an unhappy penchant for practising archery at the deer of a Sir William Lucy, author of "Harry and Lucy," "O *dear* what can the matter be," &c.

To Oph. weeping. There's "*Princes Mixture!*"
Are you up to *snuff?*
Why it brings tears into your eyes! [*aside*] (Enough:
My anger's cooling when it should get *higher*
I'll *cut my sticks*, and then *revive my fire*)
Dry up your tears! you must have been, I wot,
Peeling of onions—"Lady of *Shalott!*"
Adieu, my dewdrop: I no longer stay:
Mad dogs at sight of water must away!

Exit Hamlet.

Oph. This eligible lot going at once, if no
Advance! *the figure* 's miserably low!
Would I might say "there's no *reserve*," but he
Something too much of this hath shewn to me.
Nor can I warrant the nag sound, altho'
The King's Plate" will be his. Not long ago,
"*The Ring*" itself was in his power: a dolt!
Just at the winning post to go and bolt,
With such a *speedy-cut!* Woe, woe, is me!
But woe he heeds not; 'tmight as well be "Gee."
His bride elect all day in tears might sit;—
Her *bridal rain* he would not mind *a bit!*
What must I do? Hamlet's the Prince no more!
But now the *wrecks* of what he was before!
The glass of fashion once—a *mirror beau!*—
The mould of form—his tailors all said so—
Where now the *polish* in that glass which glow'd?
And what's this mouldiness about his mould?

Is there no patent pill to calm his soul?
No "*Ball* in aid of the poor wandering *Pole*?"
There's something *rotten*, Denmark, in thy state!
The *apple* of thine eye!—This tête-a-tête
Has quite upset me. Tell me where, O where,
My Hamlet and my castles (in the air)
Have flown? He bid me "to a Nunnery go!"
Be shav'd, and all that sort of thing, O no!
I'll *none* o'that! I can see through his *veil!*
I'll bring a breach of promise! If that fail,
I'll bring another, which shall make a pair
Of *breaches*—for the Prince's wife to wear!

Exit Ophelia.

SCENE III.—*A room in the Castle. Chairs and table, on which a punchbowl, pipes, (one of gigantic proportions) glasses, lighted candle, &c.*

Air—"*The glasses sparkle on the board.*"

Enter KING, QUEEN, POLONIUS, MARCELLUS, COURTIERS. FIRST NAUGHTY COURTIER *forgetting to remove his hat, the same is angrily knocked off by the King.*

King. Just take that hint on etiquette, you lout!
You play *at hazard* so "the *caster's* out."
You don't suppose yourself, you vulgar vassal,
In *Hatton* Garden or in *Belvoir* Castle!

You might be Lord K*ingsale*,* to sell your King—
Or "Snowdon's knight," Fitz-James, whom Scott
did sing!†
What airs he gives himself! But mind, my cock!
Those *hairs* of yours don't come unto *the block!*
Why what is this? [*perceiving* SECOND NAUGHTY
COURTIER *in his arm chair.*]
What bragian bloater dare
Inflict his carcase on our best arm chair;
There's something hatching—like a hen he sits—
My gun! I'll blow this sitting shot to bits!
What ho, my gun!

Queen. Don't think of shooting here!
The *manors* arn't *preserv'd* at all, my dear!
Take my advice, love! let him have that seat
Call'd the King's *Bench!* Yes, let him join our
Fleet:—
"All in*the Downs* that Fleet."

King. Now let us leave
These wassals for the wassail-bowl! We grieve
To treat of business, while our Punch gets cold;
So now we'll treat to liquors,—Where's our Gold

* "Lord Kingsale alone has the right of remaining covered in the presence of royalty; but there is no foundation for the assertion of Hazlitt that he generally appears with a short pipe in his hat."—*Mrs. Jameson.*

† "Fitz James alone wore cap and plume."—*Lady of the Lake*

Ladle in Waiting? Pray, Sir, fill the glasses!
Save for those two most imperent of asses—
Disgrace the culprits, and provide them swipes!

[NAUGHTY COURTIERS *placed in corner with beer.*

Queen. Gents, I beseech you, play upon these pipes
This large one's for the King!

Mar. It is a whacker!

Pol. What a "judicious *Hooker!*

King. Where's our Bacca?

Queen. Look in our Bacca Box.

Pol. A bird's eye view
Proclaims it Bird's eye.

King. I am in *the cue*
For *Pigtail;* but what's here I won't refuse;
In fact I never smoke that which I *choose.*
Stick to *the Punch!*

Mar. [*Drinking.*] I like a *Leech* will *draw*
Mark you the *Lemon?*

Pol. Beautiful!

Queen. O Lor!
How strong it is! It's quite beyond my drinking

King. She shies at first; but then she goes like winking!
A queen of bees to suck she is by jingo!
For *beeswing* port, and *humming* ale, and *stingo!*
"How strong it is!" The speech is somewhat tri'e:—
"That old familiar song we heard last night!"

Yet, all the same, she never ceased to swig
Till she had ta'en enough to wash a gig!
She couldn't speak, Sir!

Pol. 'Twas the time to sing
"Drink to me only with thy eyes," O King!

King. Ah, apropos, the King some music craves.

Pol. You're on *the Staff*, Marcellus, *tip* your *staves!*

Courtiers. A song! A song!

Naughty Courtiers. 'Ear! 'Ear!

King. We'll crop your ears!

Queen. I'll *box* that *organ*, if they interferes!
And leave a *singing*, which those *ears* shall *bore!*

King. Now, warrior, warble; for the battle's o'er!

MARCELLUS *sings.* *Air*—"*The tight little Island.*

Jolly Bacchus one day to Papa Jove did say,
"If ever our cellars run dry, Dad;
If our nectar gets low, I know where to go;
And I've got such *a tap in my eye*, Dad!
'Tis Elsinore's Port that I mean, Dad!
To lush with the King and the Queen, Dad!
Claudius's Fruity and Gertrudes's Beauty!"
Says Jove, "That's the ticket, I ween, lad!"

Alexander the Great was a rum un to bate,
For he oft, like his sword, had a *wetting!*
But short was his reign, for at "the Champagne"
He broke down, and went out of the betting!
No, Denmark's the monarch to brag on—
His Castle shews ever a *Flag-on!*
At Can and Kanaster he can't be surpassed, for
He drinks like the fairy tale Dragon!

Oh, some babes, I've been told, spoons of silver do hold
'Tween their lips, soon as put in the cradle!
But when our Denmark's King was quite a wee thing,
In his mouth they found a punch-ladle!
And then so remarkably quick, Sire!
You took to your Daffy's Elixir,—
The nurse did remark, that in your throat a spark
Through life would infallibly stick, Sire!

So then joy and long life to the King and his wife
Let us drink, and let's hope, my fine fellars,
Decay long may spare this fine *mellow pair !*
Good luck to the King and his cellars!
O, this is the life I delight in,
As vastly superior to fighting!
Though like a brave sodger, I never will dodge a
Discharge of the grape so exciting!

Chorus. "So then joy and long life," &c.

Mar. Now, if you please, the honours, three times three!

King. You need not *count the honours,* for you see
We're *game* enough without them [*aside*](*by our tricks*).

Mar. Therefore "*a Bumper*" to the King, my bricks!

Courtiers. Brayvo! Brayvo!

[*Naughty Courtiers hiss.*

King. Turn them geese out! To hiss us
Here in the presence of our Court and Missus!
By our great predecessors, *Sweyn* and Co.,
Who *whipp'd* the English, as you all do know;

By our great ancestor, Canute, I swear!
(He chaff'd the sea—

First Naughty Courtier. Great *Sea-gull!*

King. From this chair,
Until he "put his foot in it,") that they
Shall neither *cow* nor *bully* us this way.
Take them to prison! if they struggle still,
Show *fight* and so on,—let them have *the mill!*
They won't like many *rounds*, I'll lay a tizzy!

First Naughty Courtier. He's not *St. Clement, Danes,* good Danes, now is he?

[*Naughty Courtiers taken into custody by* MARCELLUS, *and Exeunt.*

King [*rising.*] And now, my lords and ladies, let us try
Our thanks—

Enter OPHELIA [*very fantastically dressed.*]

Queen. O Gracious! What a female Guy!

Pol. Alas, alas!

Queen. We know she's not *a lad!*
Is it Plough Monday? Why she must be mad!
Look at her ringlets! what an *'airy belle!*
A likely one to *hang herself* as well.

King. And yet *the Council of* our *Niece* elect
Us'd to be orthodox and circumspect.
But let us see! Who am I? Do you know?

Oph. Are you not Uncle to the Menai Bridge?
If so,
Oblige us with a hornpipe.

Sings.

All round my hat I will wear the green willow;
All round my hat for a twelvemonth and a day!
King [*pointing to the Queen.*] Who's this lady?
Oph. Next Tuesday week! O no! She's Joseph Ady!

Sings.

A miller he had a dog, and Bango was his name—
Beefen, Bofen, Cheefen, Chofen! Bango was his name.
And so farewell!

[*Exit* OPHELIA.

Pol. I'll be revenged! O King!
May I request a twenty-four feet ring?
Or rather, since that's vulgar, I would pray
Pistols for two, and coffins for—can't say
Just now, but—
King. No! Those are French fashions, man,
To shoot a Prince! Come listen to my plan.
Since we have held the reins of power, this colt
Seems much inclined either to jib or bolt;
And from his *tears* we gather (by the by
His *rheum* is better than his company)
That he means mischief; and, in fact, he'd rather
Try Emigration and go see his father—

Where change of company, and scene, and diet,
With kindred spirits p'raps may keep him quiet.

Pol. Transplant the flower, Sire, if your *air's too hot,*
To *shadier* regions.

King. Let it *go to pot!*
When Camphine lamps flare up too high, no doubt
The shortest method is—

Pol. To put them out!

King. Exactly! So, if Fortune don't rebuff us,
We'll find for Hamlet's light *a pair of snuffers!*

[*Offers snuff-box to* POLONIUS.

Listen! You us'd to fence well in your prime—

Pol. Like an old hunter.

King. I propose some time
You take a fence with Hamlet.

Pol. What a whim!
I've *taken* long ago *offence* at him!

King. Your foils had buttons, so could never pain—

Pol. Why, *dash my buttons,* now your *point* is plain!

King. To make all safe, upon the point I mean
To rub some poison. Furthermore, the Queen
When he's athirst will offer him to drink
A cup of wine (and slightly *mull'd* I think!)

Re-enter MARCELLUS (*with note for* POLONIUS).

Mar. A note for you, Sir! Does not need reply.

Pol. [*reading.*] "With care;" and "This side up;" "to be kept dry."

"Mr. Polonies—Sir, Your virgin daughter
Lies ten foot deep down in Virginia water!"

Queen. Virginia water; what a mournful *Pall!*

King. Bring round my *Drag!*

Queen. Had you not better call
The Captain's *Gig*, and man it in her aid?

Mar. Your Majesty, the maiden's no mer-maid;
And must be too far "dipp'd" by this ('tis pity,)
Ever again to show up in the City!
She turned her back upon *the Bank*, and so
Her *floating capital* got very low,
Until it *sunk*. They seek, alas, too late,
To *bale her out!*

Queen. 'Tis *an aquatic fate!*
But very different from the fêtes, I'm told,
In old Cremona, now Cremorne, they hold!

Polonius. My daughter drown'd! O let this *fence* be *quick!*
Not *sunk* like her! Let's play out this odd trick
At once. O balk me not in these requitals!
But grant me access to your nephew's vitals!

King. Our *heir*, being *false*, we now propose shall *die*—

Pol. Among the dead men henceforth let him lie!
Here hath he lied enough!

King. In that behoof,
We "*register*" this "last new *Water-proof*."

Chorus. So down among the dead men!
Down among the dead men!
Down among the dead men!
Let him lie!

King. Now fetch our foils!
Queen. And tell that Son of mine
To step in here! [*Exit* MARCELLUS.
Polonius. And be eclipsed!
King. (*to Queen*) The wine!
Mix it, my Hebe! Sure he can't escape
This bleeding, and this *cupping* in his nape!
Yet mix it strong, for to my certain knowledge,
Young men get used to poison, while at College—
Calling it Port! And now my crown I'll lay,
Who drinks this possett "*possit omnia!*"
Queen. He 'll cry '*peccavi,*' if he drink at all—
King. In fact, my love, he 'll take *the cup and bawl*!
Queen. Well, apropos of *ball*, the *trap* 's prepar'd;—
For that poor head an "Oxford Nightcap" 's air'd;—
His sleeping draught is ready;—
Pol. Now be mine
His tucking up. To morrow I opine,
Thou'lt be avenged, my dear, damp, drownded daughter!
And Hamlet won't require his shaving-water!
Queen. He comes!
Polonius. The fence, the fence, Sire! Cram him at it
Don't let him shy nor shirk!

Queen. Why, Gracious ! Drat it !
He's brought that College gent to see fair play !
King. (taking a sight) He won't take sight of that
I think to-day :—
" Fair play 's a jewel," which we never knew
In our Regalia ! Gentlemen, how do ?

Enter HAMLET, HORATIO, *and* MARCELLUS, *with foils.*

My lord the prince ! a little bet we 've made ;
In fact a good substantial feed is *laid*—
Ham. Better go eat it !
King. That this here old gent,
With them there foils, shall never circumvent
Your royal highness !
Ham. Then his dinner 's lost :
" Down with the Rump" and Dozen to his cost !
Sing o'er that " round" he lays your roundelay
For ye shall pipe, and he the piper pay !
But sure the antiquated cove 's been drinking !
And this *strange plant* of his doth spring I 'm thinking,
From over much *rum shrub* !
Pol. You 'll find it *bitters !*
Ham So, so, old gentleman, you mean to twit us !
Give us the foils ! I 'll *cure* this *erring bloater !*
King. If Hamlet give the first or second hit, I vote a
Bumper all round ! No heel taps saving those
He 'll tap Polonius.

Polonius. Now, young man, here goes!

(Throws hat in centre; ditto Hamlet. Hamlet on Horatio's knee; Polonius backed by Marcellus. The bottle-holders tie "fogles" to chairs. The King Time-keeper and Referee.)

King. This pearl goes in our cup if he succeed,
(showing large pearl)
Ancient and costly!

Horatio. *Venerable Bead!*

Courtiers. A ring! a ring!

Hamlet. Well said: our *meads* to-day
In a *ring-fence* assuredly shall lay!

King. (drinking) We 'll do the *drainage!*

Polonius. Ten to one, Bob *Acres!*
I turn you up and dress you! What, no takers?

Horatio. In ponies! *(takes out betting-book,)*

Polonius. Done, Sir!

Queen. Why in ponies *dun?*
Won't any other colour do as well? My son,
Take him in horses! Back yourself my lad!

Hamlet. His "*settling*" in that "*Corner*" will be bad.
What's more, I'm principal and not *a-better!*
And now, old horse, you 'll find this *fence* a sweater!

(They fence in the ne plus ultra style of melodrama, at first keeping widely aloof from each other.)

Hamlet. Come, let me tickle thee, thou silly trout!
And play with thee, till all thy breath is out!

Polonius. Your *angle* 's not *acute!* If me you 're arter,
You 're like to *catch* the very "cream of *Tartar!*"
You smart young men like flowers, so, on my soul,
I mean to *pink* you *in your button-hole!*

King. I wish these cocks would peck instead of crow!
Times' up, my *tulips!* Arn't you *going to blow?*

Hamlet. A hit!

Polonius. It's not a hit; Don't try your flam on!

King. He 's *won the first hit!*

Polonius. So, you *back* his *gammon!*

Queen. Now, Hamlet, rest! and raise the wind! You choke.

King. Give him *the rest,* and then he 'll make *the stroke!*

Queen. (*offering cup.*) This *port* is *hot O man!* and just your sort!

Hamlet. I'll meet *the Swell,* and then *run into Port!*

(*They renew the fencing, during which the Queen inadvertently takes up the poison'd cup.*

Queen. The Queen carouses to thy fortunes, Prince!
Pass round "the Rosy!" Give your mouths a rince!

(*Queen, Marcellus, Horatio, and Courtiers drink from poisoned cup.*)

Marcellus. They *square* well for this *round!*

Horatio. Now press him hard!

Marcellus. *The freedom of* his *press* will soon be marr'd!

Polonius. Lay on, Black muff!

Queen. O, there has been a slip,
Between that cup and this my royal lip!

King. Alas! ar't sure that thou didst *drug it*, wife

Queen. Aye, on *the druggett* I will *lay my life!*
I die!

King. No don't! The stomach pump will heal:—

Queen. Fetch me a *pair of pumps!* My senses *reel!*
Adieu, my courtiers!

Marcellus. 'Tis indeed *a do!*
By this Excursion Train your *train* goes to!

Pol. Bleed her i' the arm, Sire, for that sometimes answers—

King. Summon to *arms* a regiment of *Lancers!*

Queen. I die! (*dies*)

Hor. Mar. and Courtiers. We die! (*die*)

Polonius. Keep your eye open there,
Or else you 'll "nap it." (*wounds Hamlet*)

Hamlet. OH! the point is bare!
That stick has stuck me! (*falls*)

Polonius. And that *point* you 'll find
A full stop, Hamlet!

Hamlet. (*rising*) In this game, you mind,
Two can go in! At once defend your wicket!
And now, old *buck*, 'twill be a case of *prick it!*

They struggle and exchange foils,

Polonius is wounded, and falls.

Hamlet. There ! How's that, Umpire ?
King. Out !
Polonius. Alas ! I'm caught
By that un-"*cover point.*"
King. By "*slip,*" I thought.—
Our friends, like *ninepins,* strew the palace o'er—
Only *the King* remains !
Hamlet. (*staggering towards king*) For me to floor !
I come to cook thy goose—behold the *spit !*
King. Surely, he 's only roasting me a bit !
Hamlet. You 'll find yourself done brown. There !
(*sticks him.*)
King. O, my bel—* (*dies.*
Hamlet. The "*ly*" he wish'd to add, but could not tell !
And now, (*falling*) dear Pa, your sinking Son must set ;
That from " the Sun" this Court news you may get !
(*dies.*

Air,—"See the Conquering Hero Comes."

Enter Ghosts of HAMLET SEN. *and* OPHELIA *arm in arm. They parade proudly the room—take wine together—and advance to front.*

Hamlet. Ladies and Gentlemen ! the moral this is,
Let no cove seek to win another's Missis !

* There is a fine parellel passage to this, in the affecting Tragedy of Bombastes Furioso.—Schlegel.

Or, p'r'aps, when all seems merry as a fiddle,
He 'll find himself, like Claudius, *foil'd i' the middle !*
[*Corpses of* CLAUDIUS *and* GERTRUDE *violently agitated.*

Ophelia. Let no young spark go and get up a flame,
Merely to throw cold water on the same! *(shudders.)*
For, tho' the daughter fail to wound his heart,
The Pa may prick him in that vital part!
[*Corpse of* HAMLET *ostensibly affected.*

Air—" Ye Mariners of England."

Ghost of Ham. Ye Married Men of England!
Permit me to suggest,—
That, if with fair and winsome wives
Ye are by Hymen blest;—
If they, like her, *(pointing to Queen)* to flirt are prone,
And you, as I, to sleep;—
Ye should try, with one eye,
A sharp look-out to keep!
For Beauty, so the proverb saith,
Sometimes is but skin deep!

Chorus by the United Corpses.

A sharp look-out pray keep, &c., &c., &c.

Dead body of Ger. Ye wedded wives of England!
Ghost of Ham. (Why ain't the old lass dead?)
Dead body of Ger. I beg to second every word
The noble Lord has said:—
For lovely as I *seem* to be,
Ghost of Oph. (Just hear the vain old fright!)

Dead Body of Ger. Yet I've been a sad *Quean.*
To that gentleman in white !
And at the Inquest thus will say
The Jury, "Sarved her right !"
Chorus by the United Corpses.
O poor Gentleman in white ! &c.

Dead Body of Ham., Jun. Ye Bachelors of England !
I've been and gotten kilt
By the Guv'nor of that lady, whom
I felt obliged to jilt !
So henceforth bear in mind, my lads,
At Pic Nic, Ball, and Play,
If 'tis this, "Wilt thou ?"—"Yes !"—
You'd better fix the day !
For come what will, there's no recall,—
Ye cannot cut away !
Chorus by the United Corpses.
You'd better fix the day, &c.

Ghost of Oph. Ye "maids of merry England !"
(The fairest maids that be !)
I'll take it as a favour, if
You'll *snub* those men for me !
Don't waltz, don't polk, don't flirt with them—
Or, if you *must*, I pray,
When with sighs and sheeps' eyes
They think they 're making play,
Why let 'em talk, my dears, but don't
Believe one word they say !
Chorus. When they think, &c.

Farewell! Farewell, kind audience!
In gloomy Charon's boat,
We now must sing another song,
That song, call'd "I'm afloat!"
How very disagreeable
These parting moments be!
Tho' we grieve much to leave
Your sweet so-ci-e-ty,
"*Good night*, and *draw the Curtain!*"
Our sad farewell must be.

(Towards the end of song the Ghosts of Hamlet and Ophelia gradually disappear.)

CURTAIN FALLS.

THE END.



